

it will never stand up to the lies that we heard to sell it.

SETTING BACK AMERICA'S DEFENSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, in Washington, officials commonly use studies and reports to legitimize various policies, and often the guidelines by which these studies are established can force a researcher into predetermined results. Traditionally, the Quadrennial Defense Review, or QDR, has been above this type of sincere process, as it is a serious exercise intended to produce a Pentagon strategic blueprint for defending our Nation from future threats. This year, however, I fear that the new QDR guidelines will overtly deemphasize conventional threats, which would result in long-term setbacks for our national defense.

I recognize the need to focus greater attention on the current asymmetric threat of terrorism and the need to drastically rein in Federal spending this year to decrease the budget deficit. However, it should not come at the expense of our ability to defeat well-established threats in the future.

Released on Monday, the Pentagon's 2006 budget would cut off the procurement of the F/A-22 Raptor after 2008. With these cuts, several high-tech sectors within our Nation's defense industrial base would be crippled, costing America good-paying jobs, future innovation and, most important, critical military capabilities.

Mr. Speaker, under the proposed budget, the Pentagon would buy just 179 F/A-22 Raptors, well short of the original 381 proposed by the Air Force. In exchange for nominal short-term savings, the move would significantly increase the cost of each aircraft at a time when production would otherwise be affordable through economy of scale. Investing nearly \$30 billion in research and development in the world's best fighter jet and then buying less than what the Air Force needs to guarantee future air dominance just does not make sense.

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It is as if we discovered the cure for cancer and then we skimmed on the lifesaving drugs.

Remarkably, the proposed cuts appear to have been made against the advice of the war planners, because Pentagon bureaucrats are ignoring the Air Force wartime requirement of the 381 F/A-22s, a number that the Secretary accepted in the last QDR. The Pentagon arrived at these pre-9/11 force levels because the F/A-22 offers unique capabilities against growing threats in the western Pacific and elsewhere. Also, a recent military exercise between the United States and Air Force fighter pilots from India, called COPE

India, proved beyond a doubt that the new foreign-made fighters now outmatch our F-15s, F-16s, and F-18s.

Furthermore, these bureaucrats are ignoring the impact that the proposed F/A-22 cuts will have on future domestic high technology production and design capacity. The American aerospace industry stands to lose more than 40,000 jobs nationwide, with some 160 suppliers in 43 States. This dismantling of our home-grown technology base would come just when subsidized foreign competitors are jockeying to displace United States manufacturing. Once lost, these hard-acquired skills will not easily return to our workforce; and, in some cases, they will never return.

In the end, at stake are vital national interests: American technology know-how, our global positions in the aerospace industry, and, most importantly, the safety of our men and women serving overseas. We must focus our armed services on more than just the asymmetries of a global war on terrorism. We cannot ignore, Mr. Speaker, a rising China, nuclear Iran, increasingly unstable North Korea, and other unconventional military threats that may need to be faced by the capabilities found in the F/A-22.

It is the job of any administration to produce an annual budget that satisfies the Nation's immediate needs like the war in Iraq. But we in Congress also have a leadership responsibility to prevent rash and unwise decisions destined to actually increase spending and cripple our ability to effectively defend against future threats.

EQUAL TAXATION FOR ALL AMERICANS WILL ENSURE SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOUSTANY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I had the first of a number of town hall meetings in my district last weekend on the issue of Social Security. I had an overflow crowd and had to turn people away, because people are confused and anxious and they want some facts. So I will try and explain a bit tonight what I explained to them there.

There are two issues. One is the ideological or public policy issue of privatization. The other is the financial and fiscal stability of Social Security. They are totally separate, as the President admitted last week during his round of staged town hall meetings around the country.

For the future stability of Social Security, here is what the concern is: conservative projections by the actuaries of Social Security say that 40 years from now, we might only have enough income coming into Social Security to pay 75 percent of promised benefits. The Congressional Budget Office says 50 years from today, 80 per-

cent of promised benefits. So there is a problem that is out there. We should resolve that.

I have proposed in the past three Congresses legislation to do that; it is done simply, to say that all Americans who work for wages and salary should pay the same amount of tax on all of their earnings. Millionaires today pay a tiny fraction of their income to Social Security because after \$90,000, no one pays. Someone who earns \$30,000 a year pays 6 percent of their income. If you lift the cap, you create so much income for Social Security, that you could exempt the first \$4,000 of earnings.

So under my proposal, everybody who earns less than \$90,000 a year gets a tax break. The less you earn, the bigger the tax break. So that is one way of resolving that.

The President has a different proposal. He says we should cut benefits. He is not sure which way he would choose, but his commission chose a method that would reduce benefits 40 years from today by 40 percent. So the President takes a possible potential reduction in benefits 40 years in the future of 25 percent, and he guarantees a reduction in benefits today of 40 percent. That is a heck of a way to solve a potential possible future problem, by guaranteeing people they will get less.

Then he says he wants to create private accounts. Let me tell my colleagues what the President's proposal is for privatizing accounts. People would be able to divert some of their FICA tax into an account controlled by the government with a limited range of investments; the President said they would be very conservative and very limited, because he does not trust people to invest conservatively; controlled by the government, chosen by the government; and one would not be able to borrow against it, unlike Federal employees with their TSP. You could not withdraw it early, unlike Federal employees and other people with 401(K)s and pay a penalty and withdraw it. And at the end of your working life, the government would say to you, this is the President of the United States' plan: well, that money you diverted over there, we assume if Social Security had kept your money, it would have earned inflation plus 3 percent, so we are going to subtract that from what you earned with your investments. And if you did not earn more than inflation plus 3 percent, the government will actually reduce your already-reduced Social Security benefit; and if you manage to beat the market and beat that, they will let you have that money only after they force you into this so-called plan, let me have my money; the President's idea of privatization, the government controls it, the government lends it to you, the government borrows the money to lend it to you, and then if you beat the market, the government forces you to buy an annuity from an insurance company. That is the President's so-called privatization plan.